

## Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PM-05 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 CIAE-00  
INR-10 NSAE-00 /050 W  
-----046471 311622Z /43

R 311457Z AUG 78  
FM AMEMBASSY PARIS  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6743  
INFO AMCONSUL BORDEAUX  
AMCONSUL LYON  
AMCONSUL MARSEILLE  
AMCONSUL STRASBOURG

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STATE PASS INR/RWE (MR. HOSTIE) AND EUR/WE(MR. LISSFELT)

FOLLOWING MESSAGE SENT PARIS DATED 8/29/78 FROM  
NICE RPTD FOR YOUR ACTION/INFO:

QUOTE:  
NICE 404  
E. O. 11652: N/A  
TAGS: PINT, PINS, FR  
SUBJ: CORSICA AND THE METROPOLE - AUTONOMY, DECENTRAL-  
IZATION, AND THE FUTURE OF CORSICA

REF: NICE 262(PARIS 19777), NICE A-3

TEXT  
BEGIN SUMMARY: IN A SERIES OF MEETINGS THE  
UNIONE DI U POPULU CORSU (UPC) TRIED TO BRING ITS  
PROGRAM TO THE ISLAND, EMPHASIZE THAT IT IS A LEGITI-  
MATE ORGANIZATION AND DISCREDIT GOVERNMENT PLANS FOR  
CORSICA. THE CENTRAL AUTHORITY MEANWHILE APPEARS TO  
BE BANKING ON ECONOMIC IMPROVEMENT AND A CLAMP-DOWN  
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ON VIOLENCE TO BRING PROGRESS TO THE ISLAND AND  
MAINTAIN ITS LONG-STANDING TIES TO FRANCE. DECENTRAL-  
IZATION IS APPARENTLY BEING EXAMINED AS A VEHICLE FOR  
THE PRESIDENT'S PROGRAM FOR FRANCE. HOW IT WOULD  
AFFECT CORSICA MAY AFFECT ITS FUTURE FOR THE  
PRESIDENT. END SUMMARY  
THE UNIONE DI U POPULU CORSU (UPC) RECENTLY HELD A

SERIES OF SEVEN "SUMMER CONGRESSES" IN CORSICA WHICH WERE INTENDED TO REACH MOST OF THE ISLAND. THEIR PURPOSE IS A BIT VAGUE BUT SEEMED DESIGNED TO DO THE FOLLOWING:

- A. COUNTER THE SUCCESS OF VALERY GISCARD D'ESTAING'S VISIT RECENTLY (NICE 262),
- B. POLITICIZE THE "PROBLEME CORSE",
- C. EMPHASIZE THE IMPORTANCE OF MAINTAINING CORSICAN CULTURE,
- D. DEFINE UPC POLICY, PARTICULARLY VIS-A-VIS FRONT DE LIBERATION NATIONAL CORSE (FLNC) AND VIOLENCE.

THE PRESIDENT'S VISIT  
THE SEVEN CONGRESSES WERE ON THE WHOLE POORLY ATTENDED. THE FIRST (IN ILE ROUSSE ON JULY 28) AND THE LAST (AJACCIO ON AUGUST 13) DREW CROWDS OF ABOUT 1500; THE OTHERS MUCH LESS. EACH INVOLVED SPEECHES BY UPC LEADERS AND ENDED WITH A CULTURAL PROGRAM. REFERENCE WAS OFTEN MADE TO THE PRESIDENT'S RECENT VISIT AND THE GOVERNMENT'S FAILURE TO DEAL WITH THE PROBLEME OF THE "CORSICAN PEOPLE" DESPITE PROMISES FROM MANY PRESIDENTS.

POLITICIZING THE "PROBLEME CORSE"  
UPC LEADERS ARE APPARENTLY AWARE OF THE NEED TO LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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POLITICIZE THE "PROBLEME CORSE" IF THEY ARE TO HAVE ANY SUCCESS IN BUILDING A MOVEMENT. MOST CORSICANS STILL SEE THEIR PROBLEMS AS ECONOMIC/SOCIAL AND FIND, THEREFORE, LITTLE CONNECTION BETWEEN IMPROVED CONDITIONS AND AUTONOMY/INDEPENDENCE. THE GOVERNMENT RECOGNIZES THIS AND DURING VALERY GISCARD D'ESTAING'S RECENT VISIT HE DWELLED ON ECONOMIC MATTERS. AT THE SAME TIME THE GOVERNMENT SENT OUT STRONG SIGNALS TO WOULD-BE TERRORISTS AND INDEPENDENCE MOVEMENTS THAT VIOLENCE WOULD BE HARSHLY DEALT WITH: E.G. THE STIFF SENTENCES HANDED DOWN TO THE BRETON AUTONOMISTS FOLLOWING THE BOMBING OF VERSAILLES.

DECENTRALIZATION: AN OPTION?  
NEVERTHELESS, THE DAY BEFORE THE FIRST UPC CONGRESS, VALERY GISCARD D'ESTAING CONVENED A MEETING AT RAMBOUILLET TO DISCUSS THE QUESTION OF

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INR-10 NSAE-00 MCT-02 /052 W  
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R 311457Z AUG 78  
FM AMEMBASSY PARIS  
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INFO AMCONSUL BORDEAUX  
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DECENTRALIZATION. IS THE PRESIDENT SERIOUSLY  
CONSIDERING MOVING ON THIS ISSUE? IF SO, CONDITIONS  
IN CORSICA MAY WELL BE AN IMPORTANT CONSIDERATION:  
I.E. CAN VALERY GISCARD D'ESTAING HAVE DECENTRALIZATION  
WITHOUT ENCOURAGING AUTONOMY/INDEPENDENCE MOVEMENTS?  
PERHAPS MORE IMPORTANT FOR CORSICA, IS SOME DECENTRAL-  
IZATION NECESSARY TO DEVELOP STRONG LEADERSHIP AMONG  
CORSICANS OPPOSED TO AUTONOMY/INDEPENDENCE OR WILL IT  
ONLY INCREASE THE INFLUENCE OF THE CLAN SYSTEM?

ALTHOUGH SOME PREFECTURAL OFFICIALS EXPRESS SCEPTICISM  
ABOUT ANY REAL DECENTRALIZATION AND VALERY GISCARD  
D'ESTAING HAS APPARENTLY ABANDONED IT ON A REGIONAL  
LEVEL (NICE 262), LOCAL OFFICIALS CONTINUE TO SEE IT  
AS A WAY OUT OF THEIR IMPASSE (LITTLE CONTROL OVER  
LOCAL AFFAIRS BECAUSE OF VERY LIMITED ACCESS TO FUNDS).  
DURING TALKS WITH MAYORS OF SMALL TOWNS AND VILLAGES  
OVER THE PAST THREE MONTHS ON THE MAINLAND AND  
CORSICA, DECENTRALIZATION (REAL ACCESS TO FUNDS AND  
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RESPONSIBILITY FOR THEIR USE) WAS ALWAYS ONE OF THE

FRST TOPICS RAISED WHEN DISCUSSING LONG-TERM RESOLUTION OF THEIR PROBLEMS (HOUSING, EMIGRATION OF YOUTH, ATTRACTING JOBS, ETC.) THE PROBLEM IS PARTICULARLY ACUTE ON CORSICA WHERE TRADITIONAL EMPLOYMENT IN THE GOVERNMENT AND AGRICULTURE HAS BEEN GREATLY REDUCED. THE YOUNG DO NOT WANT TO LEAVE, HAVE DIFFICULTY FINDING JOBS, READ ABOUT AND SEE ACTS OF TERRORISM (BOMBINGS AND, DURING THE SUMMER, FOREST AND MAQUIS FIRES). THE FEAR IS THAT WHEN THESE PEOPLE REACH MAJORITY IN TWO TO FOUR YEARS THEY WILL HAVE FEW CONSTRAINTS ON ACTING VIOLENTLY AGAINST THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT. THEY ARE REMAINING ON THE ISLAND DURING THEIR FORMATIVE YEARS, MANY WITHOUT JOBS, WHILE THEIR PARENTS WERE AT THAT AGE WORKING FOR THE GOVERNMENT.

THE UPC HOPES TO CAPTURE THE YOUNG AND CHANNEL THEIR ENERGIES INTO A POLITICAL MOVEMENT FOR AUTONOMY. AT PRESENT THE UPC IS WEAK AND HAS NOT CONVINCED THE VAST MAJORITY OF THE POPULATION OF THE NECESSITY FOR AUTONOMY. THE FRONT DE LIBERATION NATIONAL CORSE (FLNC) HOPES TO POLITICIZE THE CORSICAN PROBLEM BY TERRORIST METHODS BUT APPARENTLY HAS FEW MEMBERS (ESTIMATES RANGE FROM 50-200). THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT SEEMS TO BE BANKING ON ECONOMIC IMPROVEMENT. WOULD DECENTRALIZATION GIVE THE GOVERNMENT AN EXTRA LEVER TO CONTROL EVENTS? IT IS RISKY AND IF VALERY GISCARD D'ESTAING'S DECISION IS YES, A WAY WILL HAVE TO BE FOUND TO AVOID REINFORCING TRADITIONAL CLAN POLITICS. IMAGINATIVE AND PROGRESSIVE LEADERS EXIST IN CORSICA BUT IT MAY PROVE IMPOSSIBLE TO AID THEM WITHOUT AIDING THE CLAN SYSTEM ALSO. THE GOVERNMENT HAS THE EDGE AND THE SUPPORT OF THE POPULATED LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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TION BUT WITHOUT REAL ECONOMIC PROGRESS AND AN EFFECTIVE CRACKDOWN ON VIOLENCE, IT WILL NOT BE ABLE TO KEEP THE SUPPORT FOREVER.

UPC POLICY ON THE ISSUE OF LEGITIMACY  
ALTHOUGH THE VARIOUS SPEECHES PRODUCED LITTLE NEW IT WAS OBVIOUS THE UPC LEADERS ARE TAKING PAINS TO CONTINUE TO PRESENT THEMSELVES AND THE UPC AS LEGITIMATE, RESPONSIBLE AND AS REJECTING VIOLENCE. THEY WERE CAREFUL TO DISASSOCIATE THEMSELVES FROM THE FLNC WHILE AT THE SAME TIME DECLARING SUPPORT FOR INDIVIDUAL CORSICANS "STRUGGLING" FOR CORSICA, INCLUDING THOSE ARRESTED FOR BOMBINGS. ALTHOUGH DIFFICULT TO RECONCILE LOGICALLY IT SEEMS THAT UPC LEADERS ARE AFRAID OF LOSING CONTROL OF ANY AUTONOMY/ INDEPENDENCE MOVEMENT PARTICULARLY IF THE YOUNG BEGIN

TO TURN TO VIOLENCE. BY RECOGNIZING A DIFFERENCE  
BETWEEN ORGANIZATIONS (READ FLNC) AND INDIVIDUALS THE  
UPC PROBABLY HOPES TO NOT ALIENATE THE MORE RADICAL  
YOUNG PEOPLE.

THE UPC WOULD LIKE TO DEAL WITH AND BE RECOGNIZED BY  
THE GOVERNMENT. TO DATE THE CLOSEST THEY HAVE COME IS  
EDMOND SIMEONI'S MEETING WITH JACQUES CHIRAC IN PARIS.  
MUCH IS MADE OF THIS AND PARTICULARLY CHIRAC'S PROMISE  
TO LOOK INTO THE "UNPRAISEWORTHY" ACTIONS OF THE FOUR

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PM-05 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 CIAE-00  
INR-10 NSAE-00 MCT-02 /052 W  
-----046173 311622Z /43

R 311457Z AUG 78  
FM AMEMBASSY PARIS  
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INFO AMCONSUL BORDEAUX  
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RPR DEPUTIES FROM CORSICA. SO.FAR NOTHING CONCRETE  
HAS BEEN DONE BUT THE UPC CONSIDERS SIMEONI'S MEETING  
WITH CHIRAC AN IMPORTANT INDICATION OF LEGITIMACY EVEN  
THOUGH CHIRAC REFUSED TO DISCUSS AUTONOMY.

THE CULTURE ISSUE  
CORSICAN CULTURE IS SOMETHING THAT MOST CAN AGREE  
SHOULD BE PRESERVED AND THE CULTURAL PROGRAMS IN FACT  
BRING IN MANY TO UPC RALLIES. THE UPC HAS FAILED,  
HOWEVER, TO CONNECT PRESERVATION OF CORSICAN CULTURE  
TO THE NEED FOR AUTONOMY AND THERE IS SEEMINGLY LITTLE  
POLITICAL FALL-OUT FOR THE UPC FROM ITS CULTURAL

PROGRAMS.

COMMENT

THE MEETINGS COULD BE CONSIDERED A PARTIAL SUCCESS FOR THE UPC. THEY DID NOT POLITICIZE THE CORSICAN PEOPLE AND MOST WERE POORLY ATTENDED (L50-300 PEOPLE) BUT IT DID GIVE THE UPC LOCAL PRESS COVERAGE AND DID GIVE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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THE ORGANIZATION A CHANCE TO PUBLICLY DEFINE THEIR ROLE VIS-A-VIS VIOLENCE AND THE FLNC AND TO PUBLICIZE SIMEONI'S MEETING WITH CHIRAC. ALL THIS DOES NOT CHANGE THE FACT, HOWEVER, THAT THE UPC IS LOOKED TO BY FEW CORSICANS FOR LEADERSHIP. FOR THE VAST MAJORITY OF CORSICANS THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT STILL IS THE FOCUS FOR PROGRESS. ALTHOUGH THERE IS NO REASON TO BELIEVE MOST CORSICANS WOULD CHANGE THEIR ATTITUDE THE PREVAILING VIEW AMONG MANY IS THAT THE ADMINISTRATION WILL HAVE TO PROVIDE FOR THE YOUNG TO CONTROL VIOLENCE IN THE COMING YEARS. VALERY GISCARD D'ESTAING SEEMS TO BE LOOKING TO ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE TO IMPROVE THE CORSICAN RICKETY ECONOMY. WOULD THE ADDITION OF DECENTRALIZATION CREATE MORE PROBLEMS THAN IT SOLVES? MANY PREFECTURAL OFFICIALS SAY YES -- LOCAL POLITICIANS SAY NO. FOR CORSICA, AT LEAST, A DECISION TO IMPLEMENT REAL DECENTRALIZATION (ACCESS TO FUNDS) WOULD GREATLY INCREASE THE POWER OF LOCAL POLITICIANS. ALTHOUGH THE INFLUENCE OF THE CLANS IS WEAKER THAN IN THE PAST, DECENTRALIZATION MIGHT DO LITTLE MORE THAN STRENGTHEN THEIR HOLD ON LOCAL POLITICS. UP TO NOW PREFECTURE CONTROL OF FUNDS HAS BEEN A SOURCE OF POWER TO COUNTERBALANCE FAMILY/CLAN INFLUENCE. THIS RELATIONSHIP MUST BE CONSIDERED IN VALERY GISCARD D'ESTAING'S DECISION. EDENSWORD UNQUOTE  
HARTMAN

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## Message Attributes

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